Tonolli Corporation

EPA Region 3
Pennsylvania
Carbon County
Along Rte. 54 in
Nesquehoning

EPA ID# PAD073613663

11th Congressional District

Last Update:
August 2002

Other Names:
None

Current Site Status

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is overseeing the cleanup of the Tonolli Corp. site where construction activities are complete. Remaining work includes continued groundwater monitoring and landfill leachate removal and treatment. Institutional controls also need to be placed on the on-site landfill to restrict any activities which may damage the cap.

Site Description

The Tonolli Corporation site operated as a secondary lead smelter and lead-acid battery recycling facility between 1974 and 1985. The recycling operations included crushing the batteries and recovering the lead and plastics from them. The 30-acre site included a lined landfill containing about 84,700 cubic yards of waste and 2,000,000 gallons of standing water, an estimated 39,000 cubic yards of lead-contaminated soil, and 13,000 cubic yards of battery wastes. In 1985,

the owner and the state detected arsenic and cadmium in on-site monitoring wells. The same year, Tonolli filed for bankruptcy. EPA completed a preliminary assessment of the site in 1987, and identified it as a candidate for emergency response. In 1989 EPA took emergency action to remove a 500,000 gallon wastewater lagoon. The site is located in Carbon County, Pennsylvania in a sparsely populated valley between Broad Mountain to the north and Nesquehoning Mountain to the south. An estimated 17,000 people live within three miles of the site. The Lansford/Coaldale Joint Water Authority provides water to residents in the area. Nesquehoning Creek, adjacent to the site property, has been contaminated with heavy metals since 1985.

Site Responsibility

Cleanup of this site is the responsibility of the Federal government and parties potentially responsible for site contamination.

NPL Listing History

Our country's most serious, uncontrolled, or abandoned hazardous waste sites can be cleaned using federal money. To be eligible for federal cleanup money, a site must be put on the National Priorities List. This site was proposed to the list on June 24, 1988 and formally added to the list October 4, 1989.

Threats and Contaminants

Lead, arsenic, cadmium, and chromium from the former smelter and recycling operations were found in on-site soils and monitoring wells. Nesquehoning Creek also contained levels of lead, arsenic, and cadmium. Lead contaminated soils and battery casings were found on site. Potential threats to trespassers included incidental swallowing or direct contact with contaminated water, soil, or debris.

Contaminant descriptions and associated risk factors are available on the Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry, an arm of the CDC, web site at http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/hazdat.html EXIT disclaimer

Cleanup Progress

In 1989, EPA removed and treated liquids and sludges in a lagoon; treated and disposed of liquids in the site's storage tank; constructed a

surface water collection and treatment system, and the repaired the fence to limit site access. The site conditions were stabilized, and hazardous substances were removed. The lagoon was filled, the area was regraded, and security measures were taken. In 1991, EPA ordered 46 potentially responsible parties (PRPs) to operate and maintain the on-site storm water treatment system.

EPA approved the final cleanup design for the site on February 20, 1998. Construction for the cleanup began in April 1998. EPA and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania have entered into a consent decree with the PRPs for the performance of the cleanup. The consent decree was lodged with the U.S. District Court on March 4, 1998, and entered by the Court on May 7, 1998.

The former smelter and crusher buildings, as well as other buildings and tanks at the site were decontaminated, demolished and the scrap metal sent off site for recycling. To date, since the start of the site cleanup in April 1998, over 77,000 cubic yards of lead contaminated soil have been excavated and taken to the on-site landfill for disposal. All soil with more than 1,000 parts per million (ppm) lead on the site and 500 ppm lead in the adjacent residential area is being excavated. Over 36,000 cubic yards of this soil, with over 10,000 ppm of lead, was treated prior to disposal. Over 5,000,000 gallons of landfill leachate and storm water at the site has been treated and discharged to the Nesquehoning Creek. The construction of the passive groundwater treatment trench adjacent to the Nesquehoning Creek has been completed. The trench is approximately 1,400 feet long, 24 feet deep and three feet wide and filled with limestone. Several oil storage tanks and over 5,000 cubic yards of oil impacted soils were excavated at the site. The southern, eastern and northern side slopes of the landfill have been expanded and stabilized.

PRP engineer designed an expansion to the on-site landfill to accommodate the lead-contaminated soil remaining at the site. A new area or cell for the landfill was created adjacent to the western embankment of the existing landfill. This new cell includes a bottom liner and leachate collection system and is large enough to contain all the waste left at the site.

EPA has also prepared a plan to address the petroleum contaminated soil at the site. Approximately 5,000 cubic yard pile of No. 4 fuel oil

contaminated soil, which was stored in a covered pile on a concrete pad on the site, will undergo on-site bioremediation and re-used as top soil at the site. This will reduce the toxicity, mobility, and volume of the organic contamination in the soil, while providing for the beneficial re-use of the soil on site to replace topsoil and reduce the need for obtaining topsoil from an off-site source.

All lead contaminated soils on site and off site have been excavated and backfilling and regrading has been completed. Contaminated sediments have been removed from Nesquehoning creek. Construction of the on-site landfill cap has also been completed. The prefinal inspection was conducted on November 29, 1999.

EPA issued the Preliminary Construction Completion Report on December 13, 1999, documenting that construction activities were substantially complete at the Tonolli Site. Remaining activities include continued groundwater monitoring and landfill leachate removal and treatment. Institutional controls also need to be placed on the on-site landfill to restrict any activities which may damage the cap.

Contacts

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Detailed public files (Administrative Record) on EPA's actions and decisions for this site can examined at the following locations:

Nesquehoning Borough Office
114 West Catawissa Street
Nesquehoning, PA 18240

U.S. EPA Region III
6th Floor Docket Room
1650 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029
215-814-3157

Please call for an appointment.